



Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy

Kallista Village Incorporated (Kallista Village Inc) acknowledges that we gather, work, learn and play on the lands of the Wurundjeri people of the Kulin Nations and pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging.

1. Purpose

This Policy outlines how Kallista Village Inc prioritises the safety and wellbeing of children and young people, and the steps we will take to do this.

It informs our community of everyone's obligations to act safely and appropriately towards children and young people, guiding our processes and practices for the safety and wellbeing across all areas of our work.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all members - staff, volunteers, contractors, Executive Committee and Sub-Committees, children, young people and other individuals involved in our organisation - referring to their conduct in relation to children or young people, irrespective of whether they are engaging in Kallista Village Inc activities, or otherwise.

Key Risks:

- Child physical or sexual abuse
- Grooming (abuse of trust usually occurs where there is an ongoing relationship)
- Inappropriate child-to-child or adult-to-child contact
- Circulation of sexually explicit material

3. Statement of Commitment to Child Safety

Kallista Village Inc is a Child Safe organisation, with zero tolerance for child abuse and a commitment to children's best interests. This policy demonstrates the strong commitment of members of Kallista Village Inc, including management, staff and volunteers to child safety and wellbeing, and how Kallista Village Inc keeps children safe from harm, including child abuse.

All children who participate in our activities have a right to feel and be safe. We encourage children to express their views and we listen to their suggestions, especially on matters that directly affect them.

Particular attention is given to the child safety needs of Aboriginal children and young people, those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, children and young people with disabilities, those unable to live at home, children and young people who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and gender diverse, intersex and queer (LGBTIQ+) and other children and young people experiencing risk or vulnerability. Inappropriate or harmful behaviour targeting children and young people based on these or other characteristics, such as racism or homophobia, is not tolerated at Kallista Village Inc, and any instances identified will be addressed with appropriate consequences.



Child safety is a shared responsibility. Every person involved in Kallista Village Inc has an important role in promoting child safety and wellbeing and promptly raising any issues or concerns about a child's safety.

We take proactive steps to identify and manage any risk of harm to children and young people in our environment. When child safety concerns are raised or identified, we treat these seriously and respond promptly and thoroughly.

The Child Safe Standards require organisations that provide services for children to have processes for responding to and reporting suspected child abuse. The Kallista Village Inc Child Safety Person will use the Incident Disclosure Report form to record allegations of abuse or safety concern in our organisation. Members or staff can also be given this form to record disclosures, and all disclosure incident reports must be stored securely.

REPORTING

Physical or sexual abuse of a child, including grooming for sexual conduct with a child under the age of 16 years, is a crime.

Members of Kallista Village Inc, who reasonably believe they have witnessed such abuse must by legal obligation, report it to the designated Kallista Village Inc contacts, or official authorities, including Victoria Police. During Kallista Village Inc events you may report in person to the Kallista Village Inc Information Tent, and speak to the Kallista Village Inc Child Safety Person.

Worried about a child or young person's safety? It is important that you record what you observe in relation to your concern including the date, location and description of the child or people involved. Please see 'Complaints and Reporting' and 'Record keeping' below.

You Must Report:

1. If the child or young person is in **Immediate** physical danger, or the concern relates to sexual abuse – call the Police on 000.
2. A disclosure, allegation or observation is made, and you have reasonable belief that a child needs protection, report to Department of Families, Fairness and Housing Child Protection on 1300 360 391 or 131 278 (after hrs.)
3. If there is a concern about the safety, health, or wellbeing about a child or young person, call Orange Door Outer Eastern Melbourne on 1800 271 150.

Concerns about inappropriate behaviour of a Council staff member, volunteer or contractor?

- In addition to reporting the matter to the relevant authorities as outlined above, please report your concerns to the Kallista Village Executive Committee or Shire of Yarra Ranges:
- Email: kallistavillage@gmail.com or childsafeyarraranges.vic.gov.au



4. Definitions

Child abuse means:

- a sexual offence committed against a child
- an offence committed against a child under section 49M(1) of the Crimes Act 1958 (Vic), such as grooming
- physical violence against a child
- causing serious emotional or psychological harm to a child
- serious neglect of a child.

Harm is damage to the health, safety or wellbeing of a child or young person, including as a result of child abuse by adults or the conduct of other children. It includes physical, emotional, sexual and psychological harm. Harm can arise from a single act or event and can also be cumulative, that is, arising as a result of a series of acts or events over a period of time.

Child/Children/Young Person means a person who is under the age of 18 years.

Concerns and complaints:

A concern refers to any potential issue that could impact negatively on the safety and wellbeing of children.

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction to Kallista Village Inc related to one or more of the following:

- our services or dealings with individuals
- allegations of abuse or misconduct by a staff member, a volunteer or another individual associated with Kallista Village Inc or its events/activities
- disclosures of abuse or harm made by a child or young person
- the conduct of a child or young person at Kallista Village Inc
- the inadequate handling of a prior concern
- and general concerns about the safety of a group of children or activity.

5. Roles and Responsibilities:

Child Safety Person:

- are suitably trained and experienced members who can provide advice on child safety matters and reporting requirements.
- Kallista Village Inc Child Safety Person/s are displayed onsite.

Executive Committee:

- ensure effective child safety and wellbeing governance, policies, procedures, codes and practices are in place and followed
- model a child safe culture that facilitates the active participation of children, young people, families and staff in promoting and improving child safety, cultural safety and wellbeing
- enable inclusive practices where the diverse needs of all children and young people are considered
- reinforce high standards of respectful behaviour between children, young people and adults, and between peers



- promote regular open discussion on child safety issues within the organisation including at executive and committee meetings
- promote free council run professional learning for members and volunteers (where appropriate) to build deeper understandings of child safety, cultural safety, children and young people wellbeing and prevention of, and responding to abuse
- create an environment where child safety complaints and concerns are readily raised, and no one is discouraged from reporting an allegation of child abuse to relevant authorities.

Staff and Members/Volunteers:

- participate in child safety and wellbeing induction, and always follow the organisation's child safety and wellbeing policies and procedures
- act in accordance with our Child Safety Code of Conduct
- identify and raise concerns about child safety issues in accordance with our Child Safety Responding and Reporting Obligations Policy and Procedures
- ensure children and young people's views are taken seriously and their voices are heard about decisions that affect their lives
- implement inclusive practices that respond to the diverse needs of children and young people.

6. Policy Principles

This Policy is underpinned by the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations, which now align with the updated Child Safe Standards.

Child Safety Code of Conduct

Our Child Safety Code of Conduct sets the boundaries and expectations for appropriate behaviours between adults and children / young people. It also clarifies behaviours that are not acceptable in our physical and online environments.

We ensure that children and young people attending Kallista Village Inc activities and events know what is acceptable and what is not acceptable so that they can be clear and confident about what to expect from adults in the organisation.

The Child Safety Code of Conduct also includes processes to report inappropriate behaviour.

Establishing a culturally safe environment

Kallista Village Inc is committed to establishing an inclusive and culturally safe organisation where the strengths of Aboriginal culture, values and practices are respected.

Our organisation and volunteers consider how every child and young person can have a positive experience in a safe environment. For Aboriginal children, we recognise the link between Aboriginal culture, identity and safety and actively create opportunities for Aboriginal children, young people, and the Aboriginal community to have a voice and presence in our planning, policies, and activities.

Suitability and Support of Staff and Volunteers

Kallista Village Inc.

kallistavillage@gmail.com

Child Safety & Wellbeing Policy



Kallista Village Inc puts child and young people safety and wellbeing at the centre of recruitment and screening processes for staff and volunteers. All members, including the Executive Committee must have Working With Children Checks.

When engaging staff or volunteers to perform child-related work, we will:

- sight, verify and record the person's Working with Children clearance
- collect and record:
 - proof of the person's identity and any professional or other qualifications
 - the person's history of working with children and references that address suitability for the job and working with children.

All newly appointed staff and members/volunteers will be expected to participate in the induction program where they receive and Induction Pack containing:

- the Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy (this document)
- the Child Safety Code of Conduct
- the Child Safety Responding and Reporting Obligations Policy and Procedures
- the Volunteer Agreement
- and any other child safety and wellbeing information that Kallista Village Inc Executive Committee considers appropriate to the nature of the role.

Staff and Volunteers are required to sign an agreement stating that they have understood and agree to abide by Kallista Village Inc policies and Code of Conduct.

Kallista Village Inc is committed to ensuring that all staff and volunteers receive training to ensure they understand their responsibilities in relation to child safety and to support their engagement with children. Assisting staff and volunteers to incorporate child safety considerations into decisions and to promote a safe environment where children and young people are empowered to speak up about issues that affect them.

All staff engaged in child-connected work will be supervised appropriately to ensure that their behaviour towards children is safe and appropriate.

Inappropriate behaviour towards children and young people will be managed swiftly and in accordance with our Code of Conduct, complaint handling policy and disciplinary policy. Child safety and wellbeing will be paramount.

Complaints and reporting processes

Kallista Village Inc fosters a culture that encourages all members - staff, volunteers, children, young people, parents - to raise concerns and complaints. This makes it more difficult for breaches of the code of conduct, misconduct or abuse to occur and remain hidden.

We have clear pathways for raising complaints and concerns and responding and this is documented in our Complaint Policy.



All reports of child abuse and child safety concerns will be treated seriously, whether they are made by an adult or a child/young person and whether they are about the conduct of an adult, child or young person. All complaints and child safety concerns will be responded to promptly and thoroughly.

If there is concern for the immediate safety of a child, immediately call 000.

Record keeping

Kallista Village Inc acknowledges good record management is a critical element of child safety and wellbeing, and is committed to making and keeping full and accurate records about all child-related complaints or safety concerns.

Records which may assist with the investigation of a complaint or safety concern will be identified and kept as part of the record of an investigation. Records will be kept even if an investigation does not substantiate a complaint.

We will record and keep the outcome of any investigations, and the resolution of any complaints. This includes findings made, reasons for decisions and actions taken.

Records will be stored securely in accordance with government guidelines.

Information sharing

Kallista Village Inc may share relevant information to promote the safety and wellbeing of children, where it is appropriate and in their best interests.

Information about complaints is confidential, except where it is necessary to share information to respond properly to a complaint or to prioritise child safety. We may also need to share information about incidents or complaints with external authorities to comply with the law or to prioritise safety. More information is available in our complaint handling policy.

Related policies and procedures

This Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy is to be read in conjunction with other related policies, procedures, and codes. These include our:

- Code of Conduct
- Child Safety Responding and Reporting Obligations Policy and Procedures
- Complaints Policy
- Volunteers Policy and Agreement

Supporting legislation

- Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 (Vic) (including Child Safe Standards)
- Children, Youth and Families Act 2005 (Vic) (including reporting to Child Protection)

Review of child safety practices

Kallista Village Inc has established processes for the review and ongoing improvement of our child safe policies, procedures, and practices.



We will:

- review and improve our policy every 2 years or after any significant child safety incident
- analyse any complaints, concerns, and safety incidents to improve policy and practice

**This policy was approved by the Kallista Village Inc Executive Committee in September 2023.
To be reviewed in September 2025.**



Child Safety Code of Conduct

Statement of Commitment

Kallista Village Inc is a child safe organisation which welcomes all children, young people and their families. We are committed to providing environments, events, and activities, where children and young people are safe and feel safe, where their participation is valued, and their views respected and heard.

We have no tolerance for child abuse and take proactive steps to identify and manage any risks of harm to children and young people, during or outside activities and events organised by Kallista Village Inc, whether in physical or online environments.

Purpose

The Child Safety Code of Conduct sets expectations for how members, staff, volunteers and contractors at Kallista Village Inc meetings, events and associated activities must behave to support and ensure the safety for children and young people.

The Child Safety Code of Conduct applies to all physical and online environments attended by children and young people. It also applies during, or outside events and activities.

The Kallista Village Inc Code of Conduct identifies positive child safe behaviours that we ask staff, volunteers and contractors to demonstrate. It also identifies behaviours that we consider unacceptable and not permitted at Kallista Village Inc meetings, events and associated activities.

At Kallista Village Inc meetings, events and associated activities staff, volunteers and contractors are expected to follow these standards of behaviour at all times.

Obligations

I will:

- take all reasonable steps to protect children and young people from abuse
- listen and respond to the views and concerns of children and young people, including where it relates to concerns that they feel unsafe
- uphold the rights of children and young people who come into contact with Kallista Village Inc meetings, events and associated activities to feel heard on matters relevant to their safety, taking disclosures of harm or abuse seriously
- identify and mitigate risks to the safety and wellbeing of children and young people
- report any concerns, allegations, disclosures or observations of child abuse in line with Kallista Village Inc Child Safety Policy and Code of Conduct
- abide by Kallista Village Inc meetings, events and associated activities's commitment and obligation to be a child safe organisation
- actively promote and consider cultural safety for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people, and those from culturally and / or linguistically diverse backgrounds, and consider their needs in providing suitably adjusted environments
- provide a welcoming, inclusive and safe environment that supports and values the ideas and opinions of children and young people and treats them with respect regardless of their race, colour, gender identity,



sex, sexual orientation, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, culture, disability or other status

I will not:

- condone or participate in illegal, unsafe, abusive or harmful behaviour towards children – this includes although not limited to physical violence, sexual abuse, emotional or psychological abuse, grooming, create fear, neglect or sexual misconduct
- ignore or disregard any concerns, suspicions or disclosures of child abuse or harm
- exaggerate or trivialise child abuse issues or the safety and wellbeing of children and young people
- discriminate against children or young people on the basis of their age, gender identity, race, sex, cultural or sexual orientation, vulnerability, ethnicity or disability
- develop inappropriate / 'special' relationships with children or young people including relationships that show favouritism or unnecessary or unsuitable attention
- display violent or inappropriate behaviour towards a child or young person
- use inappropriate, offensive, hurtful, harassing, abusive, sexually provocative, demeaning, culturally inappropriate or discriminatory language or gestures when speaking with, or in the presence of a child or young person
- initiate unnecessary physical contact with children and young people or exhibit behaviours, or do things of a personal nature for children and young people which may be construed as inappropriate
- conduct a sexual relationship with a child or young person or indulge in any form of sexual contact with a child or young person
- engage in open discussions of a mature nature including but not limited to sexual experiences, drug or alcohol use in the presence of children and young children
- use any computer, mobile phone or video and digital camera to exploit or harass children or young people or expose them to offensive sexualised content
- take photographs, screenshots or share images of children involved in activities that are not authorised by Kallista Village Inc meetings, events and associated activities
- have unauthorised contact with children, or young people either online, on social media or by phone
- exchange personal contact details with a child or young person such as phone number, social networking sites or email address unless necessary
- offer children and young people alcohol, cigarettes or other drugs
- put children and young people at risk through being alone with a child



Breach of the Code of Conduct

Some breaches of this Code of Conduct may need to be reported to Victorian Police, or to the Commission for Children and Young People. Our Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy provides more information about reporting obligations to external authorities.

A breach of this Code of Conduct may result in reporting to authorities. Some behaviours on their own may not be a serious breach of the Code of Conduct but together may indicate a concerning pattern of behaviour that poses a risk to the safety of Kallista Village Inc meetings, events and associated activities

Breaches of the Code of Conduct may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment, membership, or volunteer contract.

PLEASE NOTE: If any person in a position of authority within our organisation becomes aware of a substantial risk that a child may become the victim of a sexual offence committed by an adult associated with the organisation (for example, an employee, member, contractor or volunteer), and they have the power or responsibility to reduce or remove the risk, then they must take all reasonable steps to do so. A person in authority who negligently fails to take appropriate action to address the risk may be charged with the criminal offence of 'failing to protect' and may face a term of imprisonment.

If an adult reasonably believes a sexual offence has been committed by an adult against a child or young person, they must report it to Victoria Police by calling 000 or going to their local police station. Failure to disclose the information may be a criminal offence.

See the Kallista Village Inc Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy for further information in relation to reporting allegations of child abuse.

I have read this Code of Conduct and agree to abide by its terms.

Name:

Signature:

Date:

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To be reviewed in September 2025.**